



Date: February 19, 2013

To: Appropriations Committee c/o appropriationtestimo@cga.ct.gov

Subject: Testimony on DSS Budget

TESTIMONY OF Donna Copeland, Director, Westcott Wilcox Elderly Residential Housing Inc.
IN OPPOSITION TO
HB 6350- AN ACT CONCERNING THE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE
30, 2015, AND OTHER PROVISIONS RELATING TO REVENUE.

Senator Harp, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Donna Copeland. I am the Director of Westcott Wilcox Elderly Residential Housing Inc. I am unable to attend but want to offer my strong opposition to the Governor's Budget, specifically the capping of residential care home rates and elimination of the small partial rate increase from last year.

As an 11 bed residential care home every penny counts. My budget for 2013 (if you do not cut or take away what has been given) will show only \$1,600.00 profit over expenses. I am sure you know what it means to run a very tight budget, but I do not think you see how much even the slightest increase or decrease affects all the residential care homes. I would like to be able to repair faucets that drip and toilets that run but won't be able to pay a plumber \$95.00 an hour to take care of the little problems if I see a reduction in reimbursement rates.

Residential care homes should be increased not forced to close. We provide low cost housing to individuals who are not capable of living independently. I have a two year waiting list for rooms. The local social service agencies are knocking at the door daily to try and get placement for individuals who are not safe in apartments because they can't be left alone. Many individuals put themselves in harm's way by not being able to prepare proper food safely and take their meds on time. At residential care homes we offer med reminders and prepare three healthy meals every day. Our staff is on sight to ensure that residents without the capacity to look out for themselves are not only watched but become an active member of our group home. Some of my residents would end up on the streets and others would end up in nursing homes if we shut down. The ones on the streets will become a danger to themselves and others. The ones in the nursing homes will cost the state four times that of my home. Please consider this information as you proceed. Residential care homes need an increase in order to continue to upkeep our facilities and to pay our staff more than the \$10.00 per hour without benefits that we offer today.

Sincerely

Donna Copeland